

The Natural Approach

June 22, 2012

The Natural Approach

- A comprehension approach
- Importance to listening comprehension—how infants learn languages
- There is a "silent period"
- Can use TPR at the beginning level

The Natural Approach

- ◉ Krashen and Terrell view the Natural Approach as belonging to a centuries-old tradition of learning "based on the use of language in communicative situations usually without recourse to the native language"
- ◉ A "rediscovery" of older methods such as the Direct Method

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- The Natural Approach is based on what Terrell calls "naturalistic" principles of language acquisition.
- Principles stated in Krashen's "Monitor Model,"

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- (1a) The Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis: adults have two ways of developing competence
- Acquisition
- language is learned by using it for communication, such as children do with their first language

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- ◉ (1b) The Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis: adults have two ways of developing competence
 - ◉ Learning
 - ◉ the conscious study of the language.
 - ◉ learning cannot lead to acquisition

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- (2) The Natural Order Hypothesis
 - grammatical structures are acquired (not learned) in a predictable order.

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- (3) The Monitor Hypothesis
- utterances are initiated by the acquired system, not by rules
- the only function of conscious learning is for speakers to monitor the accuracy of their performance

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- (4) The Input Hypothesis
- individuals acquire language by understanding input that is slightly beyond their current level of competence—generally in the form of listening or reading
- $I + 1$, where "I" represents the person's current level of language competence.

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- (5) The Affective Filter Hypothesis
- learners' attitudes and emotions can facilitate or impede language acquisition
- with anxiety, students' "affective filter" prevents them from receiving input that could further their acquisition of the language.

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- Four principles on which the Natural Approach is based
- (1) comprehension precedes production
 - implies that the instructor always uses the target language and strives to make speech comprehensible through gestures, examples, pictures, etc

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- (2) production is allowed to emerge in stages
 - students first responding nonverbally (the "silent stage"), later with single words, combinations of words, and then sentences and paragraphs
 - responses in the students' native language are also accepted in the early stages

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- (3) the course syllabus consists of communicative goals and is organized by situations, functions, and topics rather than grammatical structures.

10. Food and drink

Learners should be able to deal with some aspects of eating and drinking:

10.1 *types of food and drink*

order a meal in a restaurant, refer to a menu, say what meal they want, what they want to eat and how it should be prepared (boiled, fried, etc); seek similar information from others

10.2 *places where you eat and drink*

ask about places where one can eat and drink; give information to others about same subject; order food and drink (see 10.1 above); ask for the bill; paying and tipping.

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- (4) classroom activities should foster a low affective filter by making input comprehensible to students, encouraging them to express their thoughts and feelings, and not correcting their errors.

The Natural Approach: Positives

- the method was simple to understand
- compatible with the knowledge about second-language acquisition
- could go alongside existing classroom practices

The Natural Approach: Criticisms

- the recommendation of a "silent period" terminated when students feel ready to "emerge"
- students will "emerge" at different times
- the idea of "comprehensible input"
 - hard to determine what will be "comprehensible" to the students